

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on July 19, 2004. Claims 1-4 are pending, of which claim 1 is the sole independent claim. All claims stand rejected.

By the foregoing, claims 5-10 are newly presented. No new matter has been added and the Examiner is kindly requested to enter the newly presented claims. These claims find support thereof in the specification as a whole and at least in claims 1-4.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent Publication 20040033171 to Kvietok et al. in view of US Patent Publication 20030194355 to Pedrotti et al. Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent Publication 20020159916 to Whitby et al. in view of Pedrotti.

The Examiner is kindly requested to withdraw the rejection made 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent Publication 20040033171 to Kvietok because the subject matter for which Kvietok is being cited does not have priority to the present application. The present application claims priority to International Application PCT/ES02/00180 having a filing date of April 12, 2002. Kvietok has a filing date of April 16, 2003 and is a continuation-in-part application claiming priority to U.S. Application Ser. No. 09/904,019 having a filing date earlier than the present application.

However, a careful reading of the '019 application suggest that the subject matter for Kvietok is being cited was not disclosed in the '019 application. Accordingly, the earliest priority for the subject matter for which continuation-in-part application Kvietok is being cited is more than one

year after the priority date of the present application. The Examiner is kindly requested to withdraw the reference.

Notwithstanding the inapplicability of Kvietok; neither Kvietok, Pedrotti, nor a combination of the two disclose, teach, or suggest the presently claimed invention. Similarly, neither Whitby, Pedrotti, nor a combination of the two disclose, teach or suggest the presently claimed invention.

The present invention relates to an evaporator device. Herein, the invention provides an elegant simplification in the assembly of an evaporator device. Whereas, it has been known in the prior art to use wires to connect the heating elements to the printed circuit board, the presently claimed invention eliminates the need for wires and welding. A printed circuit board is provided that includes a support unit for supporting the heating elements and metallic contacts that are integrated with the heating elements. In this manner the heating elements are supported vertically and are positioned on each side of the wick.

Therein, all independent claims require a support or a support unit on the printed circuit board for supporting at least one heating element, which is directly connected to at least one metallic contact integrated with at least one heating element.

Kvietok discloses heating elements 40 and 42 that are connected by wires 66 to a printed circuit board, as clearly shown in Fig. 9. The circuit board is furthermore connected by separate wires 66 to plug 26. See paragraph 47. Kvietok alone or in combination with Pedrotti does not disclose, teach or suggest supporting the heating elements and furthermore does not disclose, teach or suggest supporting the heating elements and an integrated metallic contact by a support on the printed circuit board as required by all independent claims.

Whitby similarly discloses heating elements 3A and 3B connected by wires 6A, 6B and 6C, 6D to printed circuit board 5. Therein, heating elements 3A and 3B are disposed over the wicks 8A and 8B and appear to be supported by the wicks and/or housing 1. Whitby alone or in combination with Pedroni does not disclose, teach or suggest a support unit mounted on the printed circuit board for supporting the heating elements nor does Whitby alone or in combination with Pedroni disclose, teach or suggest a support unit for supporting the heating elements and an integrated metallic contact.

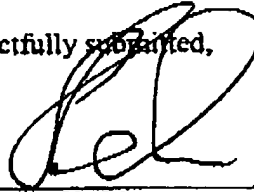
Furthermore, as now required by claims 5 and 9, a substantially rigid metallic contact is in contact with a plug. The substantially rigid metallic contact is directly connected to a heating element and is integral with the heating element. Both are supported by a support unit on the printed circuit board. Neither, Kvietok, Pedroni, nor a combination of the two; nor Whitby, Pedroni, nor a combination of the two disclose, teach or suggest limitations.

All dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend. For the reasons given, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, which is earnestly solicited.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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